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ABSTRACT

This module is part of a set of management and supervisor training (MAST) materials developed by the Department of Energy for the Waste Isolation Division. Its stated purpose is to enable trainees to organize work activities efficiently and effectively. The first section of the module is an introduction that includes a terminal objective and opening remarks intended to focus the trainees' attention on the subjects discussed in the module. Most other module sections begin with a list of enabling objectives. Many sections contain "critical incidents" or real-life occurrences at the Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant that relate to the section topic. Some illustrate effective management practices, and some illustrate ineffective ones. Each critical incident includes "lessons learned" information. Section topics are as follows: the organizing process, using different types of organizations, managing change, managing projects, building teamwork into an organization, group dynamics, and managing conflict. A list of "smart moves" is included near the end of the module. Contains 38 references and a practice test. Answers and feedback for the test are provided. (YLB)

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ED 395 154

Waste Isolation Division (WID)
Management and Supervisor Training (MAST) Program

ORGANIZING

MAS-108

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Trainee Name: _____

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A. MODULE INTRODUCTION

Terminal Objective

Upon completion of this module, trainees will be able to organize work activities efficiently and effectively.

Mastery of the terminal objective will be demonstrated by scoring 80 percent or higher on the module examination.

Supervisors and managers need to plan what their group will accomplish. Then they need to control what happens while their plans are implemented. But wait a minute. There's something missing. Isn't there a step between planning and controlling? Yes there is--organizing.

Before plans can be implemented, supervisors and managers must attend to organizing. **Organizing** is determining how work is to be segmented and coordinated. The purpose of organizing is to create human systems that can implement plans precisely and efficiently. We call these human systems "organizations."

Why bother organizing? Because problems can result when organizing is neglected. Here are some examples:

- Poor environment/organization matches

  The business environment isn't static. Change is constant. Organizations become obsolete if they haven't been organized to adapt to change.

- Poor work/organization matches

  Organizations must be designed to fit the work they're responsible for producing. Otherwise, inefficiencies result.

- Performance of unimportant work

  As an organization funded by U.S. taxpayers, WID has a responsibility to make the most of division resources. There are many important tasks that directly support the WIPP mission. There's no time for employees to work on unimportant tasks. Yet, that can happen if a section/department isn't properly organized. Employees engage in busywork while the rest of the division carries on with what really matters.

- Peak load staffing

  This occurs when an organization is staffed to meet its highest work load rather than its average workload. This can produce problems because employees don't have enough to do when the peak demand, high workload period is over.

- Duplication of effort

  When an organization doesn't make time for organizing, duplication of effort can result. For instance, an organization might have two separate groups unknowingly working on the same project.

Avoiding these problems requires organizing. And organizing can require making complex decisions. This module will provide you with information to make these decisions.

B. THE ORGANIZING PROCESS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify good organizing practices.
2. Identify organizing practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in organizing.

The organizing process usually consists of four phases:

1. Identifying work and assigning it to positions
2. Creating an organization structure
3. Staffing the organization
4. Making sure the organization's mission is understood

Let's briefly discuss each of these phases.

Identifying Work and Assigning It to Positions

What work will your organization do? This information can come from a variety of sources:

- Senior managers
- Work authorization directives
- Department of Energy directives
- The work breakdown structure
- Job descriptions

Once work has been identified, it must be assigned to positions. Authority and responsibilities for each position have to be determined. Once this is done, job descriptions should be created. Consult MAS-104, *Responsibility and Authority*, for more information on job descriptions, responsibility, and authority.

Creating an Organization Structure

After work has been assigned to positions, the positions must be grouped together into work units. Sometimes this takes place in reverse order. Work units are created and then work is assigned to positions. Work units are the components of an organization's structure. Work units used at WID include teams, sections, and departments.

An important consideration in creating an organization structure is span of control. **Span of control** is the number of direct reports a manager or supervisor has. **Direct reports** are people who directly report to you. If employees report to a supervisor working for you, these employees aren't your direct reports. The supervisor, however, is one of your direct reports.

A lot of research has been conducted on span of control, but no foolproof method for determining optimum span of control exists. Five to seven has often been cited as an ideal span. But studies have shown that the proper span can range from 1 to 30, depending on the organization and situation. The average span of control at WID is six.

There are limits to span of control. When spans of control are too small, it leads to inefficiencies. The organization has more levels of management than necessary. And unnecessary levels usually have a negative effect on communication. Information flowing upward and downward has unnecessary layers to work through. Sometimes information is screened out and doesn't make it to the next level. Or information gets distorted as it passes from one level to the next. A plan that was definite and complete at the top level may lose clarity as it's explained at lower levels.

Another disadvantage of too small a span of control is expense. Levels of management are expensive. As the number of levels increase, the number of managers increases. Each manager requires a staff to assist him or her and space for offices. More and more effort and money are devoted to managing the organization.

As spans of control increase, the number of managers decreases. This means less administrative overhead; but the burdens on the managers increase. Less time is available for activities such as planning and communicating.

An orchestra conductor can handle 150 direct reports because they're all reading from the same score. In a manufacturing environment, where employees work on assembly lines, spans of 25 are common. But at WID, bosses and employees need to exchange ideas, discuss consequences and alternatives, and keep one another informed. This type of communication usually requires spans of control of 10 or less.

A number of factors affect the appropriate span of control:

- how competent the manager/supervisor is
- the degree of specialization in the work group
- the similarity of tasks in the work group
- the type of information needed by group members
- group members' need to work independently
- how much access group members need to their supervisor/manager
- coordination

  This is the extent to which supervisors/managers must coordinate the activities of their organization with other division activities.

- organizational assistance

  When supervisors/managers receive assistance from deputies, assistants, and team leaders, their span can be greater.

- geographic proximity

  This is how physically close a supervisor's/manager's operations are. When operations are spread out, span of control may have to be smaller than if operations were close together.

- the complexity of work performed

  The complexity of work is influenced by factors such as:

  - the predictability of work demands
  - the amount of discretion exercised
  - extent of employees' responsibility
  - the number of different tasks performed

  When jobs are complex, it's difficult for supervisors and managers to control more than a few employees. Spans of control should be smaller. When jobs are routinized and not complex, supervisors and managers can control more employees. Spans can be larger.

Staffing the Organization

After an organization structure has been created, it needs to be staffed. Care should be exercised when staffing. The success of an organization depends upon finding and hiring people who will do a good job.

When staffing, start by identifying knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) the organization will need to succeed. What's essential? What would be useful? Thinking in these terms will help you form an organization that will succeed.

Once you've identified KSAs your organization needs, contact Human Resources. They can help you find people with the needed KSAs.

Sometimes you don't have that much flexibility about who you can choose for the organization you're forming. You may inherit employees who don't have all the KSAs your organization needs to excel. In that case, you'll have to find ways to acquire the missing KSAs. Here are some of your options:

- Coaching organization members
- Mentoring organization members
- Having people who have the missing KSAs pass on what they know to organization members
- Using training to help organization members acquire needed KSAs

Information that will help you make good staffing decisions is included in MAS-112, *Administrative Requirements*.

Making Sure the Organization's Mission Is Understood

After you've staffed your organization, make sure organization members understand their mission. The best of plans can fail if organization members don't understand their mission.

Writing a charter can help. Charters make the organization's mission explicit. The review and approval processes charters undergo helps create a common understanding of the organization's mission. For more information on charters, see MAS-112, *Administrative Requirements*.

Don't stop with the charter. Talk to the employees within the organization and those who will interact with it. Explain the organization's function, mission, and role in the division.

You've now formed an organization. Ensure that it gets off to a

good start by monitoring how well it functions. Watch for problems caused by communications inefficiencies or employees who don't understand their responsibilities or authority. Problems may indicate that some clarification is in order. Or it may mean that your organization needs to be redesigned.

Practices to Avoid

- Neglecting staffing

  A good organization structure can't make up for employees who don't have KSAs required to perform their jobs. So make wise staffing decisions that will help you and your organization succeed.

- Neglecting organizing tasks and decisions

  A poor organization structure can hamper the productivity of even the best employees. So don't expect good staffing decisions to cure problems caused by a bad organization structure.

C. USING DIFFERENT TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify good practices for using different types of organizations.
2. Identify practices to avoid when using different types of organizations.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in using different types of organizations.

An **organization** is a group of people working together to achieve common goals. The work, reporting, and authority relationships at WID are designed to help us achieve division goals. These relationships are the basis of WID's organization structure. Our organization structure changes frequently because division goals and priorities change.

The purpose of our organization structure is to provide order and coordinate the activities of WID managers, supervisors, and employees. This order and coordination helps us meet our performance objectives.

To be effective, WID's organization structure apportions our authorized headcount according to the work to be performed. This apportionment is shown graphically on WID's organization chart. It depicts reporting relationships and where everyone fits into the division's organization structure. Each section shown on the organization chart was created for a reason--to perform work necessary to meet our performance objectives.

Types of Organizations

There are many types of organizations. We'll limit our discussion to five commonly used organizations.

Teams

Teams are created at WID by grouping employees together and appointing a team leader. Team leaders can help reduce demands on managers by leading employees in their work and helping them solve technical problems.

Standing committees

A standing committee is a relatively permanent committee charged with performing some recurring task. The WID Process Improvement Program (PIP) Committee is a standing committee.

Steering committees

A steering committee is a committee that sets agendas and schedules of business. Steering committees are used to establish structure and direction for activities. For instance, they're sometimes used to provide support and direction to employee involvement teams. The Training Accreditation Program (TAP) Committee is a steering committee.

Task forces

Task forces are temporary groups. They're usually created to handle short-term issues and comprised of persons from various parts of an organization. Task force members work together for a limited period of time until their task is completed. The Regulatory Compliance Task Force is an example of a WID task force.

Task forces can be useful because they integrate the skills and knowledge of people from different areas. At WID, task forces are used to work on problems and projects that can't be easily handled by the existing organization structure.

Task forces are especially useful for problems and projects that:

- cut across existing departmental boundaries
- are so time-consuming that working on them would disrupt routine operations

Task forces can be useful for complex projects and challenging problems because:

- people on task forces tend to be very task-oriented

  Task forces are formed to solve a specific problem or achieve a well-defined outcome. Once task forces have accomplished their mission, they disband.

- task force members usually have diverse KSAs that can produce high quality solutions
- members of task forces can be handpicked based on their abilities relevant to the task

Project organizations

Project organizations can be useful for completing objectives that require special attention and emphasis for more than a few months. Shorter term projects can be accomplished by task forces. WID's Readiness Review Board, formed to direct the Operational Readiness Review, is an example of a project organization.

How do project organizations differ from task forces? One difference is what happens to jobs vacated by employees. Jobs of employees on task forces are typically held open until the employees return. Jobs of employees on project organizations usually are not left open.

Project organizations are useful for one-time projects that are:

- complex
- critical
- definable in terms of a specific goal
- infrequent, unique, or unfamiliar to the organization

Project organizations provide the focus necessary to manage large undertakings for which the traditional organization structure is not well-suited.

Forming and Leading Organizations

At some point in your career, you may be asked to form and/or lead a task force, steering committee, or some other type of organization. If you are, the tips we'll discuss next will help you.

Forming an organization

- Clarify why the organization is being formed

  The organization won't be successful unless the members know exactly what their mission is.

- Define how the organization will operate

  Answer the following questions:

  - Will members be assigned to the organization on a full-time or part-time basis?
  - What deadlines (if any) must the organization meet?

- What is the organization's budget?
- What sources of information will be available to the organization?
- How much decision-making authority is being delegated to the organization?
- What information should be reported, and how often?
- Are there any related topics and decisions that are beyond the organization's charter?

Sorting out the answers to these questions will help the organization proceed more efficiently.

- Determine the organization's membership

Here are some questions that will help you evaluate potential members:

- Does he or she possess KSAs relevant to the organization's purpose and tasks?
- Is he or she interested in the purpose and tasks?
- Will he or she be able to devote sufficient time to the organization?
- Does he or she enjoy working in groups?
- Is he or she effective in group settings?
- Is he or she a team player who avoids domineering behavior?

When possible, choose a member from each department that will be significantly affected by the work of an organization. Otherwise, the organization's recommendations can generate resentment and resistance. And this makes it difficult to implement recommendations.

At times it's helpful to identify groups likely to resist the organization's recommendations. You may want to include a representative from such groups as members of the organization. Initially, this may slow down how quickly the organization progresses. The group's concerns will have to be addressed in organization meetings. But this usually pays off during the implementation phase. The organization's recommendations can be implemented more quickly because the group's objections have already been dealt with.

- Prepare and hold a successful first meeting

  The first meeting sets the tone for the organization. The first meeting is likely to be a success if you:

  - prepare an agenda
  - reach a common understanding of the organization's purpose and tasks
  - define how the organization will operate
  - build an atmosphere where good problem solving and decision making practices are used

  When possible, the manager who commissioned the organization should attend the first meeting. This person will be able to help members understand the organization's mission and start off in the right direction.

Leading an organization

- Hold meetings often enough to keep members informed

  Failing to meet often enough can cause an organization to lose momentum. Meeting too often, however, wastes time and frustrates members.

- Consider dividing large organizations (more than seven members) into groups

  Experts on group dynamics have found that groups with five to seven members usually work best.

- Monitor group interactions

  Organization leaders need to pay attention to the nature of group interactions. Are group members working well together? What does their nonverbal behavior reveal? Are any group members not participating?

- Use schedules and deadlines

  Plan what the organization needs to accomplish by when. If you don't, the work may drag on until you've missed your final deadline. Involving organization members in setting deadlines can help you ensure the deadlines are achievable.

- Be sensitive to organization members' other responsibilities

  Organization members often aren't able to divorce themselves from their regular position. They have to perform duties related to their regular position. If this is the case, take this into account when planning activities. Otherwise you're likely to antagonize organization members and their bosses.

D. MANAGING CHANGE

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify good practices for managing change.
2. Identify practices to avoid when managing change.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in managing change.

"...the modern organization...must be organized for the systematic abandonment of whatever is established, customary, familiar, and comfortable, whether that is a product, service, or process; a set of skills; human and social relationships; or the organization itself. In short, it must be organized for constant change."--Peter Drucker

Sources of Resistance to Change

When you plan significant changes, expect to encounter resistance. Resistance to change can come from organizational sources or individual sources. Organizational sources of resistance to change include:

- Control systems

  Control systems include things like policies, procedures, and schedules. Because they're often intended to provide stability, control systems can be obstacles to change.

- Narrow focus of change

  The focus of a planned change effort must take into account other groups or processes that will be affected by the change. Otherwise, the change effort will probably fail.

- Group resistance

  When an employee tries to change something, coworkers may not change along with him or her. They may choose to keep doing what they've been doing because they're comfortable with their current routines.

- Threatened expertise

  Sometimes a change will make someone's expertise less vital. The person who will no longer be an indispensable expert after the change may be resistant.

- Threatened power

  Changes can also weaken the power base of employees, supervisors, and managers. These people may resist the change in an attempt to protect their power base.

- Resource allocation

  Change can run into resistance if it will affect the way resources are allocated within the organization. Resources can include things like money, headcount, and office space. Groups that feel they will lose resources because of a change may resist it.

- Vested interests

  As John Gardner, author of *Self-Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society*, wrote, "In any organization many of the established ways of doing things are held in place not by logic nor even by habit but by the force of one powerful consideration: changing them would jeopardize the rights, privileges or advantages of specific individuals." According to Gardner, vested interests "...are among the most powerful forces producing rigidity and diminishing capacity for change."

Individual sources of resistance to change include:

- Habit

  We all get into habits. And they can be hard to break. Change that requires people to break habits can be difficult to implement.

- Security

  Change can upset employees' sense of security. For instance, I may be secure in using a particular brand of word processing software. Changing to a new brand reduces my sense of security. I'm not sure I can use it without making a lot of mistakes. So I'm likely to resist switching to the new brand.

- Fear of the unknown

  Change can be accompanied by unforeseen consequences. Side effects can result that may not be pleasant. Fear of such consequences and side effects can cause resistance to change.

- Lack of awareness

  Unless a change is carefully communicated, pockets of employees will be unaware of the change. Others will misinterpret the change.

- Social factors

  Peer pressure is a social factor that can inhibit change. If group members are resisting a change, they may bring pressure to bear on any group member who abides by the change.

We've alerted you to sources of resistance to change. Now let's talk about practices to help you manage change.

Good Practices

- Use planned communication to lessen resistance

  Employees are likely to be more supportive of change once they understand why it's necessary. There are a variety of communication methods that can be used to communicate the reasons for change. By choosing and using the proper methods, you can "grease the skids" for your change. The Manager, Productivity, Quality, and Communication can assist you in planning an effective communication strategy.

- Plan how business will be accomplished

  It's usually not possible to stop all normal activities during the implementation of change. Think about how things are going to get done during the transition period.

- Consider involving key stakeholders in planning the change

  For change to be supported, you may need the backing of key people who will support or implement your change. Involving them during the planning stage can help you gain their support. People usually support what they've helped plan. It also can help you plan better, because the people you involve can give you good ideas. Once you've got the key stakeholders on board, they can help persuade other people to support the change.

- Consider using a change agent

  Sometimes people affected by change are too close to the situation to view it objectively. The perspective of an outsider can help. An outsider can 1) be more objective in his or her appraisal, 2) bring in new ideas, 3) challenge established patterns of behavior, and 4) influence the people who make the important decisions affecting the entire organization. Outsiders who perform this role are usually called "change agents." Change agents can be:

  - Consultants
  - A manager who has been recently transferred to the division
  - Someone from the Organizational Development Section

  A change agent can help you implement change by:

  - helping to plan and implement the change
  - enhancing the level of trust among those initiating change and those affected by change
  - managing conflict
  - encouraging open communication
  - creating a participative climate
  - increasing the morale of the people affected by the change

- Consider using negotiation

  If your change could adversely affect a powerful individual or group, consider what you can do as compensation. Maybe you can do something in return for their support of your change.

- Investigate reasons for resistance before trying to overpower it

  Where is the resistance coming from? Why is the change being resisted? There may be good reasons for the resistance. If there are, reevaluate the pros and cons associated with the change.

  If the change is still justified, continue with your plan or modify it based on what you've learned.

If the change is not still justified, discontinue it. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that, once change is initiated, there's no turning back.

- Try changes out on a small scale first

  Sometimes a change can be given a trial run before it's implemented on a large scale. Then what you learn can be incorporated into your change strategy. If the trial run is successful, you can publicize the success to ease peoples' apprehension about the change.

  Should you publicize the trial run before the results are in? Doing so can create excitement and visibility for the people involved in the trial run. It can also put pressure on them. They know that, if the trial run fails, the failure will be visible to others in the organization. So there may be occasions when you'll want to launch trial runs quietly. Then, if successful, the trial run's success can be publicized.

- Explain the rationale for change

  How will the change help us meet our performance objectives, reduce risk, improve efficiency? Do your homework. Then you can explain how the change is an improvement over the old method it's replacing. And answer the "What's in it for me?" question.

- Manage perceptions of the risks of change

  If you don't, people may defensively avoid the change. Defensive avoidance tactics include procrastinating, shifting responsibility (buck-passing), and supporting alternatives to the change.

- Share the power to plan change

  Consider using a participative style when planning and implementing change. You can provide opportunities to discuss proposed changes. Or you can seek participation when decisions about change are being made. Those you involve are more likely to accept and support the change. This can also increase their commitment and satisfaction.

- Make sure you have an expert knowledgeable about the changes

  You need someone who will be able to train, coach, and advise others in the new way of doing business after the change is implemented.

- Monitor how the change is working

  Changing to a new way of doing business is seldom smooth. You need keep abreast of how the change implementation process is going. This will help you make appropriate adjustments to keep your change headed in the right direction.

- Provide help and support

  Once the change is being implemented, it's important not to walk away and ignore what's happening. The employees implementing the change may need your help.

- Support and reinforce new behaviors associated with change

  Help desirable new behaviors become the norm through support and reinforcement. This can prevent the old ways of doing things from reemerging. It helps you make change permanent.

Practices to Avoid

- Regarding all resistance to change as bad

  Sometimes resistance is based on legitimate concern that a proposed change may not be good for the organization.

- Overusing the top-down approach to change

  Top-down approaches to change are fast. If the change is an appropriate solution to the problem, it can show results immediately. But there are drawbacks to top-down change, including:

  - Solutions aren't always appropriate because employees who know about the problems aren't consulted
  - Lack of involvement causes strain for those affected by the change
  - People may not be as committed to implementing the change because they weren't involved in formulating the change strategy

  It's possible to enact change from the top down, but making the change successful is another matter. It's hard to make people work together to make a change succeed. So help people affected by change see that the change is for the better and that it will be worthwhile. Avoid shoving changes down peoples throats unless there's no other way. Remember: you've got to work with these people after the change has been enacted.

E. MANAGING PROJECTS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify good practices for managing projects.
2. Identify practices to avoid when managing projects.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in managing projects.

Projects are undertakings requiring concerted effort. By "projects," we mean undertakings that a project organization has been formed to complete. Examples of projects include the WIPP Construction Phase, the Integrated Systems Checkout, and the Operational Readiness Review.

Managing projects can be complex and tedious. Project managers must plan their project and get resources needed to carry out their plan. Planning is often complicated by interdependent project activities. Once projects are underway, problems, delays, programmatic cha. es, and budget cuts often have to be dealt with.

Managing projects is extremely difficult. Even the best project managers sometimes need advice, assistance, or "recalibrating." That's why our next topic, the project owner, is an important one.

The Project Owner

It's important that an "owner" is designated for projects. The **owner** is the person who's ultimately responsible for the project. For projects of great importance to the division, the owner should be the WID General Manager. For lesser projects, the owner can be a WID senior manager. The owner should **not** be the project manager. Why not? Because project managers become immersed in their projects. This can cause them to lose the big-picture perspective necessary to keep the division's best interests in mind. Someone at a higher level in the division can assess the value and progress of projects more objectively.

Project managers need backing and guidance from someone higher in the WID hierarchy than themselves. This is important because, when projects fail, it's often for one of the two following reasons:

1. Internal conflict

   Projects often fail because of conflict between the project manager and line/functional organizations. This is characterized by foot-dragging on the part of line organizations, hampering the effectiveness of the project organization.

2. Inadequate authority

   Sometimes project managers aren't given enough authority to see their projects through to a successful conclusion. The inertia and resistance encountered while managing the project gets the best of them.

An owner at the senior management level can give backing and guidance project managers need to avoid these problems.

The Responsibility Matrix

When a project is getting started, consider creating a responsibility matrix. A **responsibility matrix** is a chart that defines task responsibilities. It shows who's responsible for what. In addition to detailing the activities of project organization members, the responsibility matrix should define the role of other WIPP organizations, support units, and subcontractors participating in the project.

Useful Project Management Techniques

There are a number of techniques you can use to plan and coordinate projects. Two common techniques are Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) and Critical Path Method (CPM). Using techniques like PERT and CPM gives you:

- A graphical display of project activities
- An estimate of how long the project will take
- An indication of which activities are the most critical to timely project completion
- An indication of how long any activity can be delayed without lengthening the project

Assistance in choosing and applying project management techniques is available from the Program Management Department.

The Dangers of Being Too Persistent

Persistence is often a valuable trait. But too much of a good thing can be bad. Managers have been known to doggedly try to make projects work long after it was time to take a new tack. This can happen because:

- We tend to see and hear what supports our beliefs
- Many of us have been conditioned to believe that persistence is a good trait

  Persistence is often seen as part of being a strong leader. This can cause us to hang on to an ill-fated project longer than we should.
- Our egos may prevent us from admitting that a project isn't going to work

  We may mistakenly view a failing project as a personal failure. To protect our self-esteem, we'll push hard to turn a failing project around rather than abandon it.

Here are some steps you can take to avoid becoming overcommitted to projects:

- Recognize overcommitment

  These questions, formulated by Barry Staw and Jerry Ross, can help you recognize when you're overcommitted:

  - Do you have a hard time defining what would make your project a failure?
  - Have you seen signs of failure for your project and then changed your definition of failure?
  - Would you feel like a failure as a supervisor/manager if your project isn't successful?
  - Do you have a lot at stake personally depending on whether the project is a success or failure?
  - Do you feel yourself getting angry or defensive when others voice concerns about your project?
  - When you find out about changes or plans, are you focusing more on how they affect your project rather than their effect on the division?
  - Do you sometimes feel that, if your project is abandoned, there will be nothing to look forward to?

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, it's a warning signal. You may be overcommitted to your project. If you answer "yes" to two of the questions, you're overcommitted. Three or more "yes" answers means you're seriously overcommitted.

- Occasionally view your project like an outsider would

  Ask yourself, "If I walked in as an outsider and took over this project right now, would I support its continuation?" If your answer is "no," then it's time to raise a red flag. Discuss the situation with your boss and other people who can objectively reevaluate the project.

- Create a climate where project managers don't fear admitting bad decisions

  Project managers will be more likely to raise red flags at appropriate times when this isn't a punishing process. Senior managers can encourage this behavior by saying things like, "I appreciate your coming to me about this when you did. I wish more people would learn to recognize when it's time to reevaluate projects the way you have."

- Recognize that good abandonment decisions are just as valuable, and sometimes more so, than good original decisions

  It requires astuteness and objectivity to make good, timely abandonment decisions. People who can make these decisions are valuable to the division.

Good Practices

- Define what the customer needs and expects

  Find out exactly what the customer wants at the outset of projects. This is important because you're not likely to meet customer expectations unless you know what the expectations are.

- Schedule your project

  A **schedule** is a timetable that serves as a basis for monitoring and controlling projects. It helps you organize your resources. Assistance in scheduling projects is available from the Program Review and Reporting Section. More information about scheduling can be found in MAS-107, *Planning*.

- Identify what's critical to your project

  Activities, events, or paths are "critical" if their delay will delay the completion of the project. Identifying what's critical allows you to focus your attention on these activities, events, or paths. Then you can ensure they're completed on time.

- Use labels such as "experimental," "pilot," and "trial"

  Labels like this can make project failures easier for everyone to cope with. They convey the message that "We knew there was a good chance the project wouldn't work." It shifts the implication from "Joe's baby failed" to "The experimental project didn't work."

- Identify and involve key people in projects

  Involve key people in project decisions. They can help you set realistic schedules, budgets, and controls.

- Consider using a project room

  It may be useful to have a room that serves as the center of operations for your project organization. The room can be used as a:

  - meeting place for project participants
  - display room for charts and schedules
  - place where the project organization can gather and build camaraderie

- Build and maintain momentum

  Project managers must build a sense of momentum among all project participants. To do this, project managers need to spend a significant portion of their time motivating and inspiring employees.

- Be prepared to "sell" your projects

  Project managers may have to make presentations about their projects on short notice. For instance, funding for a project may suddenly come into question. Project managers who can state the need for and benefits of their projects will have a better chance of protecting their projects.

- Focus on exceptions

  Some projects consist of thousands of activities. Trying to monitor that many activities isn't a good use of a project manager's time. Instead, project managers should analyze progress reports and identify activities where progress is unsatisfactory. These activities are referred to as "exceptions." By focusing on exceptions, the project manager can give these activities the attention they need.

- Keep good records of project activities

  Good records document the history of projects. Good records help:

  - identify why projects were successful or why they weren't
  - plan similar projects in the future
  - answer questions about why the project manager did what was done

  For some projects, a final report to document the history of the project is justified. Project reports usually should address:

  - The outcome of the project
  - Who served on the project
  - Project successes and failures
  - Recommendations for future similar projects

- When the end of a project is in sight, provide employees with information about what they'll do next

  Near the end of projects, employees often begin wondering what their next project or job will be. This uncertainty can distract them from the project they're involved with now. When possible, allay their concerns. Tell them about some things you intend to involve them in next. It's comforting for employees when they know they have something else to look forward to. Emphasize the necessity of finishing the current project first, though.

- Do post-project appraisals and share the lessons learned

  We'll all keep making the same mistakes if we don't learn, as a division, from them. Share your lessons learned with:

  - The Manager, Organizational Development (for inclusion in MAST or a Lessons Learned module)

- Other project managers
- Anyone else who needs this information

Practices to Avoid

- Neglecting planning

  When a project manager neglects advance planning, crises usually crop up once a project is underway. People involved in the project have to run from crisis to crisis. And this can have a negative effect on morale.

- Trying to develop detailed plans for all portions of projects

  Sometimes it's not worthwhile to try to formulate a detailed plan for every phase of a project. Certain aspects of a project may remain a mystery until after you've made some progress. So don't waste your time trying to develop detailed plans for portions of a project you can't yet define.

- Rushing projects during their early stages

  Rushing through project planning and approval stages can result in problems later on. As Frank Gulliver, expert on post-project appraisal, points out: "A rushed project is often inadequately defined and therefore out of control from the start, runs very late, and comes in over budget..."

- Ignoring the leadership aspects of project management

  Don't become so immersed in the planning, organizing, and controlling aspects of project management that you neglect your leadership responsibilities. Leadership on the part of project managers is an important factor in successfully implemented projects.

- Allowing perfectionism to hurt your project

  Perfectionists often have a hard time meeting deadlines. Help those with these tendencies understand that meeting delivery dates usually prevents attaining perfection.

- Succumbing to projectitis

  Project management expert Paul Gaddis described **projectitis** as "...a seeing of all things as though a particular project were at the center of the corporate universe..." Managers with projectitis put their own objectives ahead of division objectives. If you feel a bout of projectitis coming on, find a way to regain a proper perspective. Refocus on the overall mission of the WIPP.

F. BUILDING TEAMWORK INTO AN ORGANIZATION

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify good practices for building teamwork into an organization.
2. Identify practices to avoid when building teamwork into an organization.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in building teamwork into an organization.

"Any business enterprise must build a true team and weld individual efforts into a common effort. Each member of the enterprise contributes something different, but they must all contribute towards the common goal. Their efforts must all pull in the same directions, without friction, without unnecessary duplication of effort."--Peter Drucker

Factors Affecting Teamwork

Team values are all things group members find intrinsically desirable or valuable. Example: a group of employees believes maintaining a professional atmosphere in their trailer is essential. Effects on group interaction: good team values like this increase group coordination and efficiency.

Team attitudes are common mental positions assumed by group members. Example: "I'm going to perform my job as best as I can because I know my co-workers are doing likewise." Effects on group interaction: good team attitudes like this increase group coordination and efficiency.

Team beliefs are all things commonly held to be true by group members. Example: A security group believes that management appreciates its efforts to protect the WIPP site. Effects on group interaction: good team beliefs like this increase group coordination and efficiency.

Personality Traits That Detract From Effective Teamwork

Have you ever heard someone say "He's not a good team player?" If so, that may have been because the person possesses one or more of the traits we'll discuss next.

Egocentric

Egocentric people:

- Start most sentences with "I" and want to talk only about their experiences and problems
- Are usually poor listeners
- Rarely offer to assist others
- Insist that they perform a task because only they "know how to do it right"

Overly aggressive

Overly aggressive people:

- Try to dominate discussions and decision-making
- Attempt to perform tasks assigned to others
- Often pursue what they want with little regard for others' self-esteem

Overly passive

Overly passive people:

- Don't speak up during group discussions
- Quickly back down when challenged
- Rarely assume the leadership role in groups

Uncommunicative

Uncommunicative people:

- Rarely engage in conversation
- Often perform work without consulting others
- Have speech that's often jumbled, lacks continuity, or is blunt

Overly communicative

Overly communicative people:

- Talk incessantly, often about trivial matters
- Often neglect work in favor of talking to others

There are ways to compensate for group members who have these negative personality traits. The first is adaptation. The group member is placed in a position where the impact of his or her negative traits on the effectiveness of the group will be minimized.

Another way to compensate for group members' negative personality traits is modification. The supervisor or manager of the group member discusses (privately) the traits with group members who have the traits. Ways to eliminate the traits are discussed. This must be handled carefully. Before using modification, we recommend that you review the guidelines for counseling employees presented in MAS-110, *Employee Relations*.

Good Practices

- Understand the mission

  Develop a clear understanding of the group's mission. Writing a mission statement can help. The mission statement needn't be long, but it should be explicit. It's got to be clear enough for your group to know when it has succeeded in accomplishing the mission.

- Set goals

  Goals can be generated as a group. When group goals are shared, there is greater likelihood group members will work cooperatively to attain the goals. Ask group members, "What must we do to accomplish our mission?"

- Clarify the group's goals and ensure there's agreement and understanding among group members

- Find out what matters most

  Identify and list what has to be done to reach the goals. More information on goals and priority setting can be found in MAS-107, *Planning*.

- In group discussions, seek participation from all group members

  Encourage inactive members and discourage monopolizers.

- Build a "we" mentality into groups

  Have you ever been part of a group where one of the members sought individual prominence and recognition? If so, how did you feel about that person's behavior? Most group members resent this type of behavior. So it's important to build a "we" mentality when groups are formed. In some cases, it may be necessary to meet with self-seeking group members privately and stress the importance of team-oriented behavior.

- Encourage harmony and cooperation among group members

  When compared with groups with competitive members, groups with cooperative member relations are more likely to:

  - develop leaders
  - evaluate fellow members more favorably
  - show less hostility
  - solve their problems as a group more rapidly

- When a group is successful, make all the group members "heroes"

  This is rewarding to the group members, and it makes the group a role model for other groups to emulate.

- Promote an atmosphere where those who differ with the prevailing opinion are listened to and valued

  Those who offer a different opinion civilly should be listened to and their opinion should be considered. The majority opinion isn't always correct.

Practices to Avoid

- Trying to force everyone to be a team player

  Some individual contributors work best on their own. As Harold Leavitt of Stanford points out, "individualistic Gandhis and DeGaulles and Steve Jobs are not great team players." If you have an employee who is stubborn, egocentric, and impatient, this employee may be a detriment to a group.

- Playing it safe in group meetings

  "Playing it safe" includes things like:

  - Holding back ideas because they may threaten others' interests

  - Avoiding proposals that could affect your own job or the group you represent (because this might mean more work or changes

  - Avoiding significant changes because of an unrealistic fear of risk

    If you try to eliminate all risk associated with change, you'll never make any changes.

  - Going with the group's consensus because you want to avoid embarrassment

  - Using nonassertive delay tactics to forestall change

    These include things like throwing up unrealistic scenarios to divert the discussion or holding long discussions about insignificant details.

  - Taking an irrational anti-change stance

    Taking an "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" mindset won't work at WID.

G. GROUP DYNAMICS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify practices that have a positive effect on group dynamics.
2. Identify practices that have a negative effect on group dynamics.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in managing group dynamics.

The leader of a group has a large impact on the group's effectiveness. Groups with an effective leader can do better than the sum of its members. On the other hand, poorly led groups can do worse than the members could have done independently.

A group leader's behavior affects the group's cohesiveness. The **cohesiveness** of a group is how attached the members are to the group and its purposes. The effect of a leader's behavior will depend on the characteristics of the group. The same leadership may cause members of one group to be highly motivated and cohesive yet fail to do so in another group.

A group's cohesiveness is also affected by its size. The smaller the group, the more cohesive it tends to be. For any given task, there's an optimum group size. For instance, five or six people are optimal for discussion groups. If additional employees are superfluous and unnecessary to complete the group's task, effectiveness and satisfaction are likely to suffer with an increase in the number of members.

Group Drive

Group drive is an important concept to understand. When a group's drive is high, members' energies are directed toward group goals. If a group is also cohesive, members will work collectively and productively to reach goals. On the other hand, if a group's drive is low, members' energies will be directed elsewhere. If a group with low drive is cohesive, members will reinforce each other's tendencies to ignore group goals. Instead, they'll seek satisfaction from unproductive activities.

A group's drive is more likely to be high when members are highly committed. Members are more likely to expend energy for such groups.

Stages of Group Development

A group's members must work together for a while before they act like a team. Groups typically have to pass through three stages (forming, storming, and norming) before they're a fully integrated team (performing). These stages sometimes overlap. Movement between the stages isn't always orderly.

Forming

This is an introductory stage where the behavior of group members is superficial and polite, but trust between members is low.

Storming

This stage involves tension and conflict because members are competing for leadership and status and defining roles. The group directs its energy toward evolving a structure for the group. Storming is an important stage because a stable structure of relations must be developed for the group to become cohesive.

Norming

In this stage, group cohesion and norms are developed. **Norms** are standards, models, or patterns regarded as typical for a specific group. They define the appropriate conduct of group members. A group's norms include things like its definition of tasks, goals, the paths to the goals, and the appropriate relationships among members. Once a norm has become a mutual expectation of group members, members bring strong pressures to bear on individuals who deviate from the norm. Norms tend to be long lasting. They can survive even after all group members who established the norms have left the group.

Performing

In this stage, member roles have been established and the group is able to function effectively. The drive in this stage is to successfully complete the group's task.

When leading a group, it's important that you provide structure during the early stages of the group's development (forming and storming). Clarify the task requirements and the goals of the group. If you don't, the group will probably spend a lot of time thrashing around while seeking clarification and structure.

Good Practices

- Show your employees how to work with other groups

  As a manager or supervisor, you're in a position to affect how well your section/department works with other groups. You set an example your employees follow.

- Discourage competitive behavior

  Experts on organizational communication have found that, when group members view their roles as highly competitive, they:

  - tend to listen less to what other members say
  - understand less of what other members say
  - become less interested in high achievement
  - help one another less
  - have more difficulty coordinating group efforts
  - are more likely to duplicate the efforts of others
  - tend to be less efficient
  - tend to do lower quality work
  - may not like what they have accomplished, the group with whom they worked, or each other

  Competition is more likely than cooperation to lead to conflicts within a group.

  Recognizing unhealthy competition will take some perception. Employees aren't going to say to you: "I'm locked in competition with my coworkers, so I'm certainly not going to help them succeed. When they succeed, I lose." But they may be operating in this mindset. And fellow employees recognize it when someone thinks in a win-lose, competitive manner. They sense it and resent it. They soon lose all interest in helping the competitive coworker.

  Help your competitive employees understand that doing well and beating others are two different things. Doing well doesn't require doing well at someone else's expense. Encourage employees to strive for excellent performance rather than for victory over a coworker.

- Reward and reinforce cooperative behavior

  When group members view their roles as highly cooperative, they:

  - tend to coordinate their efforts more often
  - tend to be more attentive
  - have higher mutual comprehension of information

  In cooperative groups, there's a greater diversity of contributions per group member and the interaction is friendlier. So encourage cooperation among group members. By cooperating, employees can make the most of the various skills different group members possess. And through cooperation, a group can become more than the sum of its parts.

Practices to Avoid

- Interfering with group efforts

  Once you've created a group and given it an objective, it's usually best to allow it to proceed without interference. Joseph Raelin, expert on management of salaried professionals, found that:

  > The effective manager realizes that the professional group, when left alone to accomplish an assigned objective, can be one of the most powerful vehicles for achieving productivity within the corporate arsenal of resources. The manager's job is to further the growth and development of the group, not to interfere in its efforts through useless process constraints.

- Overemphasizing group goals

  It causes problems when groups overemphasize their own goals at the expense of the division's goals. This may not be apparent to those in the group because they're so wrapped up in what they're doing. They can't see the forest for the trees. The solution is to refocus the group on the division's goals.

- Making simplistic interpretations of group activities

  Group behavior can be misleading. Joseph Luft, expert on group processes, warns that "Polite, peaceful meetings may mean a sterile group, and stormy, contentious sessions may yield progress and growth." To judge the effectiveness of a group, you have to look deeper than the tone of the group's discussions. Look at the progress and contributions the group is making.

- Forgetting the importance of group morale

  Groups with high morale usually exhibit a common spirit of camaraderie, enthusiasm, and commitment. Groups with this type of spirit can endure conflict and stress without falling apart.

H. MANAGING CONFLICT

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, trainees will be able to:

1. Identify good practices for managing conflict.
2. Identify practices to avoid when managing conflict.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in managing conflict.

Are these statements true or false?

- All conflicts are undesirable
- All conflicts involve violent, destructive disagreements
- All conflicts produce negative results

All of the statements are false. They are misconceptions that inhibit conflict resolution. How? These misconceptions lead people to avoid conflict at all cost and deny that conflict exists.

In truth, conflict:

- is a natural occurrence in group settings
- is sometimes desirable
- can be resolved in an orderly fashion without disagreements
- can produce positive results

Most of us have witnessed destructive conflict in the workplace. Characteristics of destructive conflict include:

- Hostile, opposing views occur in an uncommunicative environment
- Conflicts are won by dominant members
- Conflict detracts from group performance
- Conflict is discouraged

- Members who disagree with a decision are punished

How can you recognize when conflict is destructive? Conflict is destructive when any of the participants are dissatisfied with the outcome and feel they have lost as a result of the conflict. Here are some of the symptoms of destructive conflict:

- Situations other than win-win (both parties gain)
- Conflict seems to only escalate onward and upward
- Small details ("nits") become major battles
- Issues become more important than goals
- Extra parties get dragged in to mediate
- Normal rules of behavior are ignored
- Participants escalate the conflict without choosing any direction or considering the consequences
- Heavy reliance is placed on overt power manipulation, threats, coercion, and deception

Sources of Conflict

Two sources of conflict in the workplace are 1) differences of opinion, and 2) personality conflicts. Differences of opinion can arise about:

- how work should be performed
- when work should be performed
- who should perform work
- what work should be performed

If conflict continues to build, a vicious circle can result. "Defensive" aggression by one person or group validates suspicion and "defensive" counteraggression by the other. The conflict continues to escalate unless it's counteracted by external factors.

As mentioned earlier, some conflict is constructive. Here are some of the characteristics of constructive conflict:

- Opposing views and different opinions are shared freely
- Conflict is resolved in an orderly manner through cooperative efforts of group members

- Conflict resolution usually strengthens the group

Here are conditions that need to exist for conflict to be constructive:

- Information must be communicated accurately
- A supportive climate must exist
- Group members must feel comfortable in challenging other group members' ideas
- The positive potential inherent in controversy and conflict is recognized
- Problems are well-defined and win-win mindsets prevail
- Members share common values and beliefs about controversy
- Common rules about conflict are established and members adhere to them

Responses to Conflict

Compromise

Compromise exists when negotiation results in each party getting a piece of the pie. Occasionally a third party is required to negotiate the outcome.

Problems exist with compromise. Persons sometimes give in too easily and fail to seek a solution that gives significant gains to either party. Neither person gets what he or she came for, but each walks away without a total loss.

Avoidance

Avoidance exists when people are non-assertive, passive, and not actively seeking cooperation. People using avoidance:

- don't openly pursue their concerns or those of others
- may sidestep issues by changing topics or withdrawing from openly dealing with the issue

Accommodation

Accommodation exists when individuals are nonassertive, cooperative, and shun competition. They neglect personal concerns to satisfy others.

Accommodation can happen if members of a group succumb to pressures not to push their point of view. Later, however, they may voice their discontent with decisions that didn't take their point of view into account.

Competition

Competition is characterized by aggressive and uncooperative behavior. Competitors pursue their own concerns at the expense of others. Individuals attempt to gain power by direct confrontation and by trying to win arguments without adjusting to the other's goals and desires. They see conflict as a battleground.

Collaboration

Collaboration is characterized by high assertiveness and high concern for others. Both parties work to find solutions that will maximize gain for both. This is the most constructive style of conflict resolution.

Keeping Conflict Constructive

To keep conflict constructive, try these techniques:

- Encourage group members to voice their opinions and ideas openly and considerately
- Ensure all group members are consulted in major conflicts
- Focus on a specific conflict rather than trying to address several conflicts at the same time
- Move the resolution along quickly; slow moving conflicts tend to turn destructive
- Build a climate where:
  - achieving the group's goals is emphasized
  - domineering behavior isn't tolerated
  - group members decide what's the best decision rather than who's right and who's wrong
  - ideas or specific behaviors can be criticized but individuals cannot
  - members don't take it personally when their ideas are rejected or someone disagrees with them
  - good communication practices are used

- the input of all group members is given equal consideration
- group members who don't agree make an effort to understand each other's viewpoint
- negotiation is used to resolve conflict between group members

  The goal of negotiation is to 1) reach an agreement and 2) not damage cooperation and team spirit.

Group members can't always resolve conflict themselves. Sometimes the supervisor or manager must do this. Group members who are unable to resolve conflicts should report this to their supervisor/manager when any of the following conditions exist:

- timely resolution of conflict is necessary to ensure safety
- conflict is delaying a major plant evolution
- conflict has existed for a long time with no end in sight

Sometimes group members won't approach you about conflict until it has gotten out of hand. So learn to recognize signs of conflict. Here are some signs to watch for:

- sighs
- doodling
- slouching
- turning away
- faltering silences
- lapses in attention
- rudely brief or abrupt speech
- uneasy twitches in facial muscles
- previously neutral comments that take on an unfriendly tone
- an increase in the rate of disagreements among group members

Of course, just because you observe one or two of these signs doesn't mean there's conflict. But it might. Further observation or exploration may be called for.

In small groups, conflict can sometimes be handled by combining each person's ideas into a group idea. This is done by finding, isolating, and clarifying areas of agreement and disagreement. Once areas of disagreement are identified, they can be classified as either differences in understanding or differences in feelings.

Differences in understanding can be resolved by:

- discovering what the person with the different understanding means

  Oftentimes a simple statement of what a person means prevents disagreements from escalating.

- checking the validity of evidence and reasoning

  It's possible for two people to reason from the same data and arrive at different conclusions. This can lead to disagreement and conflict. Going back and reevaluating the data can help.

- identifying an overarching goal

  An example of an overarching goal at the WIPP is the WIPP mission:

  > WID will manage the operations during the Test Phase of the project in a manner which will permit the Secretary of Energy to implement permanent disposal operations at WIPP in a timely manner.

  When a conflict is the result of differences in preferences or values, understanding may be increased by focusing on an overarching goal. This can cast a new light on what the group is trying to accomplish.

Differences based on feelings can be dealt with by:

- increasing the self-esteem of those with whom you disagree

  A basic source of emotional resistance is loss of face. No one wants to appear foolish, illogical, or misdirected. Reduce disagreements based on feelings by providing ego support and strengthening self-esteem.

- creating an atmosphere of inquiry

  This can be done by getting group members to probe into the issue by asking open-ended questions. Resistance often occurs because all alternatives haven't been explored.

- involving each member of the group in the discussion

  Emotional barriers and negative feelings flare up when people feel uninvited or discouraged from making contributions.

- using summaries to show the group where it's been and where it's going

  Summaries can help objectify comments and reduce excessive generalization and overstatement. Then group members can respond to a more objective summary rather than the original emotional comments.

- providing for the release of feelings

  Group members should have the opportunity to make highly emotional statements without argument or refutation. Many disagreements can be resolved simply by letting members dissipate emotions.

Conflict Between Groups

WID consists of a number of groups such as teams, sections, and departments. How would we fare as a division if the various WID groups:

- competed vigorously with one another for resources, power, status?

- focused on protecting, maintaining, and enhancing their own positions within the division?

- resisted other groups perceived to threaten what they value and possess?

The division wouldn't fare very well. Conflict and bad relations between groups would result. Bad relations between groups can produce:

- breakdowns in the flow of work

- lack of coordination between groups

- poor communication between groups

- delays and mistakes

- tension and negative feelings

- complaints from the customer

If you see any symptoms of conflict between groups, try using these techniques to improve the situation:

- Make certain that information for solving problems is discovered and held in common by the groups involved

  Representatives of different groups might meet regularly to study problem areas and to develop joint recommendations.

- Rotate people among different groups

  This can work wonders by helping groups understand each other better.

- Bring groups into close contact with one another

  Bring the opposing groups together to clear the air and allow them to share perceptions.

- Identify or develop a common set of goals

  Locate or develop an overarching objective both groups have in common.

I. SMART MOVES--WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

Here are some things you can do now to make your section/department more effective:

- Consider dividing large organizations (more than seven members) into groups (*Page 14*).
- Use planned communication to lessen resistance to change (*Page 18*).
- Investigate reasons for resistance to change before trying to overpower it (*Page 19*).
- Consider using a participative style when planning and implementing change (*Page 20*).
- Occasionally view your projects like an outsider would (*Page 25*).
- Identify and involve key people in projects (*Page 26*).
- Do post-project appraisals and share the lessons learned (*Page 27*).
- In group discussions, seek participation from all group members (*Page 32*).
- Promote an atmosphere where those who differ with the prevailing opinion are listened to and valued (*Page 33*).
- Help your competitive employees understand that doing well and beating others are two different things (*Page 37*).
- Encourage group members to voice their opinions and ideas openly and considerately (*Page 43*).

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K. PRACTICE TEST

1. A manager says, "Your span of control is the number of direct reports you have." Was the manager correct? Why?

   a. YES--span of control is the number of direct reports a manager or supervisor has

   b. NO--span of control is the number of employees in a manager's or supervisor's section/department

   c. NO--span of control is the number of exempt, supervisory, and managerial employees in a manager's or supervisor's section/department; non-exempt employees aren't figured in to the span of control calculation

   (B.3)

2. The WID Process Improvement Program (PIP) Committee is an example of a

   a. team.

   b. standing committee.

   c. steering committee.

   d. task force.

   (C.1)

3. A manager advised, "Don't worry about peer pressure. Once change efforts are launched, employees will support the change." Was the manager giving good advice? Why?

   a. YES--employees inevitably support change once they see that people backing the change are serious

   b. YES--experts on managing change have proven that peer pressure is not a concern

   c. NO--peer pressure will always prevent a planned change

   d. NO--managers should consider peer pressure when planning change because it can inhibit change

   (D.3)

4. A manager said, "We've got to eliminate all resistance to change at WID." Was the manager's opinion well-founded? Why?

   a. YES--all resistance to change is harmful to organizations

   b. YES--experts on managing change recommend that organizations periodically attempt to stamp out all resistance to change

   c. NO--although all resistance to change is harmful to organizations, attempting to eliminate it is too disruptive

   d. NO--sometimes resistance to change is based on legitimate concern the change may not be good for the organization

   (D.3)

5. A manager said, "It's vital that project managers never abandon their projects, no matter how poorly they're going." Was the manager correct? Why?

   a. YES--once costs have been incurred, there aren't any legitimate reasons to abandon projects

   b. YES--managers should defend their projects and push hard to keep them alive no matter what circumstances are encountered

   c. NO--sometimes it's in the division's best interest to abandon projects and take a new tack

   d. NO--projects should be abandoned at the first sign of difficulty

   (E.3)

6. A manager said, "Trying to monitor all project activities usually isn't a good use of a project manager's time." Was the manager correct? Why?

   a. YES--it's usually a better use of project managers' time to focus on exceptions (activities not progressing satisfactorily)

   b. YES--it's better to assign the responsibility for project monitoring to a lower level employee, once a project is underway

   c. NO--personally observing all project activities is an essential part of a project manager's job

   (E.3)

7. A manager noticed that, in group meetings, one employee dominated discussions and another employee never said anything. The manager decided this was normal behavior for the two employees and didn't try to change the two employees' patterns of participation. Was this a good practice? Why?

   a. YES--group dynamics will suffer if the manager attempts to change the two employees' patterns of participation

   b. YES--managers should let group discussions run their course; experts on group dynamics recommend against attempts to manage participation

   c. NO--the manager should have encouraged the quiet employee to participate and ensured group discussions weren't dominated by anyone

   (F.3)

8. A manager said, "Irrespective of the group's leader, a group will always do better than the members could have done independently." Was the manager correct? Why?

   a. YES--groups, regardless of whether the leaders are effective or ineffective, do better than the sum of their members

   b. YES--even a poorly led group can't do worse than the members could have done independently

   c. NO--poorly led groups can do worse than the members could have done independently

   (G.3)

9. A supervisor said, "I think the problem solving group needs to be disbanded. Group members were having a heated discussion when I passed the conference room today." A manager advised, "Check the progress the group is making before you consider disbanding it." Was the manager giving good advice? Why?

   a. YES--authorities on group dynamics have shown that stormy sessions are required before groups can make significant progress

   b. YES--to judge the effectiveness of a group, you have to look deeper than the tone of the group's discussions

   c. NO--judging the effectiveness of a group merely requires looking at the tone of the group's discussions

   d. NO--it's a good practice to disband groups whenever sessions become stormy or contentious

   (G.3)

10. A manager said, "All conflicts produce negative results." Was the manager correct? Why?

   a. YES--conflict is an unnatural occurrence in group settings that, without exception, produces negative results

   b. YES--all conflicts are undesirable, negative occurrences

   c. NO--conflicts are constructive as long as they're won by dominant members

   d. NO--conflict can produce positive results

   (H.3)

L. ANSWERS AND FEEDBACK FOR THE PRACTICE TEST

1. a. YES--span of control is the number of direct reports a manager or supervisor has

2. b. standing committee.

3. d. NO--managers should consider peer pressure when planning change because it can inhibit change

4. d. NO--sometimes resistance to change is based on legitimate concern the change may not be good for the organization

5. c. NO--sometimes it's in the division's best interest to abandon projects and take a new tack

6. a. YES--it's usually a better use of project managers' time to focus on exceptions (activities not progressing satisfactorily)

7. c. NO--the manager should have encouraged the quiet employee to participate and ensured group discussions weren't dominated by anyone

8. c. NO--poorly led groups can do worse than the members could have done independently

9. b. YES--to judge the effectiveness of a group, you have to look deeper than the tone of the group's discussions

10. d. NO--conflict can produce positive results

If you scored 80 percent or higher on the practice test, you're ready to take the module examination; please proceed to Organizational Development.

If you scored less than 80 percent on the practice test, please re-read the module and take the practice test again. If you still have questions, contact the Team Leader, Professional Development, or the Manager, Organizational Development.